

CERCLA 104(e) INFORMATION REQUEST
URGENT LEGAL MATTER: PROMPT REPLY REQUESTED
VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS

Jay W. Roberts, Registered Agent for
Big Star Barge & Boat Company, Inc.
2435 E Broadway
Pearland, TX 77581 USA
Re San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site, Channelview. TX
SSID No. 06ZQ. EPA ID No. TXN000606611

Dear Sir:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) seeks cooperation from the Big Star Barge & Boat Company, Inc. (BSB) a Texas corporation, with last known headquarters at 2435 E. Broadway, Pearland, Texas, in providing information and documents relating to the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site (Site). Obtained information will aid the EPA in its investigation of the release or threat of release of certain hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants at this Site. BSB's response will also help the EPA develop a better understanding of activities that occurred at the Site (see Enclosure 2).

This information request is not a determination that your company is responsible or potentially responsible for contamination that occurred at the Site. The EPA is sending this letter as part of its investigation of the Site and does not expect your company to pay for or perform any site-related activities at this time. If the EPA determines that your company is responsible or potentially responsible for response activities at the Site, your company will receive a separate letter clearly stating such a determination as well as the basis the EPA has for the determination.

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) Section 104(e), 42 U.S.C. § 9604(e), gives EPA the authority to require BSB respond to this information request (see Enclosure 1). We encourage your company to give this matter its full attention, and ***we respectfully request BSB respond to this request for information within thirty (30) days of its receipt of this letter.*** You may designate another official of BSB with the requisite authority to respond on behalf of the company. However, failure to respond to this information request may result in EPA seeking penalties of up to \$37,500 per day of violation. In addition, furnishing false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or representations is subject to criminal penalty under 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

Please provide a written response to Mr. Robert Werner, Enforcement Officer, at the address included in the Information Request. Please refer to Enclosures 2 and 3, which include important instructions and definitions, as well as the questions for response, in the preparation of your reply to this Information Request.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, contact Mr. Werner at (214) 665-6724. For legal questions concerning this letter, please have your legal counsel contact Ms. Barbara Nann, Attorney, at (214) 665-2157. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Sing N. Chia, Acting Associate Director
Technical and Enforcement Branch
Superfund Division

Enclosures

ENCLOSURE 1

SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS SUPERFUND SITE

INFORMATION REQUEST

RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

Under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly known as the federal "Superfund" law, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) responds to the release or threat of release of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants into the environment to stop additional contamination and to clean-up or otherwise address any prior contamination.

EPA is requesting information under CERCLA Section 104(e). Section 104(e) may be found in the United States Code (U.S.C.) at Title 42 Section (section is denoted by the symbol "§") 9604(e). 42 U.S.C. §9604(e).

Pursuant to the authority of CERCLA §104(e), you are hereby requested to respond to the enclosed information request. If you have any questions concerning the Site's history or this information request letter, please contact Mr. Robert Werner, the designated Enforcement Officer for the Site, at phone number (214) 665-6724, fax number (214) 665-6660 or via email at werner.robert@epa.gov. Please mail your response within 30 calendar days of your receipt of this request to the following address:

Mr. Robert Werner, Enforcement Officer
Superfund Enforcement Assessment Section (6SF-TE)
U.S. EPA, Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

If you or your attorney has legal questions that pertain to this information letter request, please contact Ms. Barbara Nann at phone number (214) 665-2157, fax number (214) 665.2182 or via email at nann.barbara@epa.gov. For contact via mail, use the following address:

Ms. Barbara Nann, Attorney
Office of Regional Counsel (6RC-S)
U.S. EPA Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733

ENCLOSURE 2

SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS SUPERFUND SITE

INFORMATION REQUEST

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Site is located east of the City of Houston in Harris County in the State of Texas in the area where the Interstate Highway 10 Bridge (I-10) crosses over the San Jacinto River (see Enclosure 3). The Site's known land area is a 20-acre tract of land (Tract). This Tract is adjacent to the north side of I-10 and the west side of the San Jacinto River. This Tract is located in an unincorporated area known as Channelview. The area of the San Jacinto River that is within the Site's boundaries is north, east and south of the Tract. This area of the San Jacinto River is located between the two unincorporated areas known as Channelview and as Highlands. The Site itself has no specific street address.

Soil samples taken from Tract and from river sediments in areas of the San Jacinto Rivers that are north, east, and south of the Tract have confirmed the presence of certain hazardous materials, including dioxin. River sediment in this area is suspected to be contaminated with certain hazardous materials, including dioxin, which might have migrated from the Tract. The EPA has evidence that indicates dioxin had been transported to the Tract in waste paper mill sludge that had been released onto the Tract during the 1960's.

Virgil C. McGinnes, Trustee is the Tract's current owner of record. Virgil C. McGinnes is deceased. Three exposed abandoned waste disposal pits are located on this abandoned Tract. The three abandoned waste pits cover an area that approximates 3.5 acres of the abandoned Tract's 20-acre area. Part of the abandoned Tract, including the abandoned disposal pits, is now below the adjacent San Jacinto River's water surface.

Samples collected in the area of the abandoned waste pits and in river sediments in the areas that are north, east, and south of these pits have dioxin concentrations as high as 41,300 parts per trillion. Sediments contaminated with high levels of dioxin have been found in the San Jacinto River for a distance of at least one-half mile downstream from the disposal pits.

On September 19, 2007, (72 FR 53509) the Site was proposed for listing on the National Priorities List (NPL). On March 19, 2008, (73 FR 14179) the final listing of the Site onto the NPL occurred.

ENCLOSURE 3

SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS SUPERFUND SITE

INFORMATION REQUEST

INSTRUCTIONS and DEFINITIONS

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please provide a separate narrative response for each and every Question and subpart of a Question set forth in this Information Request.
2. Precede each answer with the Question (or subpart) and the number of the Question (and the letter of a subpart of a Question, if applicable) to which it corresponds.
3. If information or documents not known or not available to you as of the date of submission of a response to this Information Request should later become known or available to you, *you must supplement* your response to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Moreover, should you find, at any time, after submission of your response, that any portion of the submitted information is false or misrepresents the truth, or, though correct when made, is no longer true, you must notify EPA of this fact as soon as possible and provide EPA with a corrected response.
4. For each document produced in response to this Information Request, indicate on the document, or in some other reasonable manner, the number of the Question (and the letter of a subpart of a Question, if applicable) to which it responds.
5. You may assert a business confidentiality claim covering part or all of the information which you submit in response to this request. Any such claim must be made by placing on (or attaching to) the information, at the time it is submitted to EPA, a cover sheet or a stamped or typed legend or other suitable form of notice employing language such as "trade secret," "proprietary," or "company confidential." Confidential portions of otherwise non-confidential documents should be clearly identified and may be submitted separately to facilitate identification and handling by EPA. If you make such a claim, the information covered by that claim will be disclosed by EPA only to the extent, and by means of the procedures, set forth in subpart B of 40 CFR Part 2. If no such claim accompanies the information when it is received by EPA, it may be made available to the public by EPA without further notice to you. The requirements of 40 CFR Part 2 regarding business confidentiality claims were published in the Federal Register on September 1, 1976, and were amended September 8, 1976, and December 18, 1985.
6. Personal Privacy Information. Personnel and medical files, and similar files the disclosure of which to the general public may constitute an invasion of privacy should be segregated from your responses, included on separate sheet(s), and marked as "Personal Privacy Information."
7. Objections to questions. If you have objections to some or all the questions within the Information Request Letter, you are still required to respond to each of the questions.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions shall apply to the following words as they appear in this enclosure:

1. The terms "and" and "or" shall be construed either disjunctively or conjunctively as necessary to bring within the scope of this Information Request any information which might otherwise be construed to be outside its scope.
2. The term "any", as in "any documents" for example, shall mean "any and all."
3. The term "arrangement" means every separate contract or other agreement between two or more persons.
4. The terms "document(s)" and "documentation" shall mean any object that records, stores, or presents information, and includes writings of any kind, formal or informal, whether or not wholly or partially in handwriting, including by way of illustration and not by way of limitation, any invoice, manifest, bill of lading, receipt, endorsement, check, bank draft, canceled check, deposit slip, withdrawal slip, order, correspondence, record book, minutes, memorandum of telephone and other conversations including meetings, agreements and the like, diary, calendar, desk pad, scrapbook, notebook, bulletin, circular, form, pamphlet, statement, journal, postcard, letter, telegram, telex, telecopy, telefax, report, notice, message, analysis, comparison, graph, chart, map, interoffice or intra office communications, photostat or other copy of any documents, microfilm or other film record, any photograph, sound recording on any type of device, any punch card, disc pack; any tape or other type of memory generally associated with computers and data processing (together with the programming instructions and other written material necessary to use such punch card, disc, or disc pack, tape or other type of memory and together with the printouts of such punch card, disc, or disc pack, tape or other type of memory); and (a) every copy of each document which is not an exact duplicate of a document which is produced, (b) every copy which has any writing, figure or notation, annotation or the like on it, (c) drafts, (d) attachments to or enclosures with any document and (e) every document referred to in any other document.
5. The term "identify" means, with respect to a natural person, to set forth the person's name, present or last known business and personal addresses, email address(es), and telephone numbers, and present or last known job title, position or business. Also provide e-mail addresses.
6. The term "identify" means, with respect to a corporation, partnership, business trust or other association or business entity (including, but not limited to, a sole proprietorship), to set forth its full name, address, and legal form (e.g. corporation [including state of incorporation], partnership, etc.), organization, if any, a brief description of its business, and to indicate whether or not it is still in existence and, if it is no longer in existence, to explain how its existence was terminated and to indicate the date on which it ceased to exist. Also provide e-mail addresses.

7. The term "identify" means, with respect to a document, to provide the type of document, to provide its customary business description, its date, its number, if any (invoice or purchase order number), subject matter, the identity of the author, addressor, addressee and/or recipient, and the present location of such document.
8. The term "person" shall have the same definition as in Subsection 101 (21) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9601 (21).
9. The term "Site" shall mean and include the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site located east of the City of Houston in Harris County in the State of Texas in the area where the Interstate Highway 10 Bridge (I-10) crosses over the San Jacinto River, both before and after EPA response action under CERCLA.
10. The term "you" or "Respondent" shall mean the addressee of this Request, the addressee's officers, managers, employees, contractors, trustees, partners, successors and agents.
11. Words in the masculine shall be construed in the feminine, and vice versa, and words in the singular shall be construed in the plural, and vice versa, where appropriate in the context of a particular question or questions as necessary to bring within the scope of this Information Request any information which might otherwise be construed to be outside its scope.
12. All terms not defined herein shall have their ordinary meaning, unless such terms are defined in CERCLA, RCRA, 40 CFR Part 300 or 40 CFR Parts 260-280, in which case the statutory or regulatory definitions shall apply.

ENCLOSURE 4

SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS SUPERFUND SITE

INFORMATION REQUEST

QUESTIONS

1. Identify the person(s) that provides answers to the questions below on behalf of Big Star Barge & Boat Company, Inc.
2. Please identify the organizational relationship between Houston International Terminal, Inc , a Texas corporation, and Big Star Barge & Boat Company, Inc. (BSB), a Texas corporation.
3. Has BSB ever participated in any planning for dredging activities in the area of the San Jacinto River, along its south bank on the north side of the I-10 Bridge in Harris County, Texas? (see Enclosure 5, Aerial photo)
4. Has BSB ever participated in any dredging activities in the area of the San Jacinto River, along its south bank on the north side of the I-10 Bridge in Harris County, Texas? (see Enclosure 5, Aerial photo)
5. If your answer to either question #3 or #4 is yes:
 - A. Please provide copies of all documents in your possession that describe or contain any information that pertains to BSB's participation in planning and/or dredging operations in the above described area of the San Jacinto River.
 - B. Please describe the dredging activities that BSB participated in planning for and/or was involved with sand dredging operations conducted in the above described area of the San Jacinto River. Your answer should include, but not be limited to:
 - 1) The period that actual dredging activities occurred.
 - 2) The name of any third party that directed, controlled, or participated in BSB's involvement with dredging operations in the above described area of the San Jacinto River.
 - 3) The location placement of any waste dredging material, i.e., disposition of "overburden" that resulted from sand dredging activities in the above described area of the San Jacinto River.
6. If your answer to the above questions # 3 and #4 is no, please explain why a Letter, dated November 20, 1998, from Houston International Terminal to Department of the Army (see Exhibit 5) identifies that, "The original permit was issued after much discussion during conferences and meeting with Parker Brothers. As you know Parker merged to form Parker LaFarge which set back our operations by at least a year. Only one (1) barge

load was removed by Parker LaFarge...In late 1997 we entered into a working contract with Mega Sand (Dan & Brenda Moore) who agreed to the mitigation plan. In September 1997 dredging recommenced and work on the mitigation plan started.””

7. Please identify the names of all dredging companies that you have reason to believe have, at any time, participated in the planning of, and/or participated in, dredging operations in the above described area of the San Jacinto River.
8. Please identify the owner of record for the area in the above described area of the San Jacinto River.
9. If BSB is the owner of record for the above described area of the San Jacinto River, please provide EPA with a copy of the current recorded deed that documents BSB's ownership.
10. Does BSB have reason to believe that the above described area of the San Jacinto River, or any portion thereof, belongs to the State of Texas or to the Port of Houston Authority by virtue of Senate Bill 222, Chapter 292, Acts of the 1927 Legislature? (see Enclosure 5, Port of Houston Authority letter) If your answer is yes, please provide EPA with copies of documents that show the State of Texas or the Port of Houston Authority might own all, or any portion, of the above described area.

ENCLOSURE 5

SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS SUPERFUND SITE

INFORMATION REQUEST

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (SITE INFORMATION)

1. Aerial photo - Preliminary Perimeter of San Jacinto Waste Pits, Harris County TX.
2. Houston International Terminals Drawing, Perimeter of Dredging Area, # 19284.
3. Letter, dated March 1, 1991, from Port of Houston Authority to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, concerning Permit Application 19284.
4. Letter, dated September 2, 1993, from Parker Lafarge Inc. to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, concerning Permit No. 19284.
5. Letter, dated November 20, 1998, from Houston International Terminal to Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers, concerning Permit No. 19284(02).

[Name, Date, Document Name]

Johnson	Nann	Peycke	Chia
6SF-TE	6RC-S	6RC-S	6SF-T